

68-2659

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4 June 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

SUBJECT : DIA Concern Over Capabilities Paper

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1. General Carroll called Admiral Taylor this morning with regard to the paper we [ ] have prepared entitled, North Vietnam's Ability to Withstand Manpower Attrition. You need not take any immediate action on this small contretemps, but the following information may be useful in case the matter should come up at the 4 June lunch or be raised privately with you by General Wheeler.

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2. As you are aware, the request for this paper was levied at the White House meeting of 22 May. The terms of reference were outlined in Mr. Rostow's hand-written notes which you gave to [ ]. You obtained, either from the President or from Mr. Rostow, a two-week period, making the deadline date for submission Wednesday, 5 June. The Rostow notes explicitly asked for a CIA paper, after completion, be forwarded to JCS for comments and then submitted with JCS comments attached.

3. During the past two weeks, I have kept in continual, informal touch with General DePuy on the progress of this paper and told him that we were preparing a draft which would be submitted to the Office of the Chairman for appropriate review prior to our sending the paper downtown.

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4. The draft was finished and coordinated within the Agency on Monday, 3 June. On that day, Monday, [ ] got hold of Col. McAuliffe (General Wheeler's Staff Aide, with whom I deal on Vietnam matters), told him the paper was coming over to him, and asked him to distribute it to whatever military components the Chairman wanted to see the draft. Also on 3 June, I advised General DePuy that [ ] was sending the paper to Colonel McAuliffe. In addition (again on 3 June), [ ] gave a copy of the draft to [ ] the DIA representative on the Vietnam SNIE.

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5. During the preparation of this paper, [ ] has been in frequent contact with DIA working levels and solicited oral and written inputs to the document, which they never provided.

6. General Carroll called Admiral Taylor this morning (4 June) to complain about the way this paper had been handled and the lack of previous consultation with DIA. He also said General Wheeler is distressed because he (Wheeler) felt that the discussion of Communist strength in South Vietnam contained in this paper slated for submission to the White House, breached your agreement with him not to surface our dispute on enemy strength.

7. [ ] and I went over this whole matter with Admiral Taylor this morning. The three of us are agreed on the following points:

a. Rostow explicitly asked for a CIA paper, which we have prepared, with JCS comments, which we are trying to obtain. Because of the nature of this request, the paper was not drafted jointly with DIA and our point of input to the military establishment has been the Office of the Chairman, rather than General Carroll.

b. Both the Joint Staff (DePuy) and the DIA working levels have been kept continuously advised on the progress of the paper and what we proposed to put therein. There is some doubt whether DIA was informed we would use CIA strength figures.

c. We consider the discussion of enemy strength germane to the argument of the paper and do not feel that this discussion breaches your agreement with General Wheeler. The paper could be written without reference to these figures on enemy strength in South Vietnam, but we believe the paper would be less helpful and less useful if it were so written.

8. Subsequent to our discussion, Admiral Taylor talked on the phone with General Carroll who advised that General Wheeler

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will be present at the 4 June luncheon, will probably raise the matter, and will suggest that the paper be rewritten to eliminate numerical reference to present Communist strength in South Vietnam. We recommend that you reserve your position on this point until you have had a chance to look at the draft yourself. We will take no further action until advised of your wishes.

Drafted by George A. Carver, Jr.  
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Final O/DDCI/mfb

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